

# Folklore Matters

Incursions in the Field, 1965–2021



Bruce Jackson

# Folklore Matters

**Simon J. Bronner**



## **Folklore Matters:**

**Folklore Matters** Alan Dundes, 1989 not a large book but that makes all the more admirable the way the author succeeds in doing justice to so many of the most important subjects in folkloristics This book is a key work and should be made compulsory reading in every university in which folkloristics is studied Jon Hnefill Aoalsteinsson Asian Folklore Studies With this book Alan Dundes has once again demonstrated what a brilliant essayist he is learned thought provoking and entertaining He has much inspiration to give to anthropologists and he is quite indispensable to folklore scholarship Bengt af Klintberg Ethnos If there were still a question whether Alan Dundes is America's leading folklorist then the essays in this volume should dispel it once and for all An internationally acclaimed scholar is at work here for whom folklore really matters in all of its varied aspects Wolfgang Mieder University of Vonn A maverick folklorist Alan Dundes challenges his colleagues and readers with erudition and candor His essays are insightful and entertaining exploring folklore with an amazing breadth Dan Ben Amos University of Pennsylvania As always a reader is dazzled by the range of Dundes erudition He doesn't just cite things he digests them Gary Alan Fine University of Minnesota For over two decades he has been a major voice urging folklorists and historians and literary critics for that manner to move beyond mere description to true interpretation of cultural texts in their contexts These essays continue that message and they do so with fresh power Jay Mechling University of California Davis These recent essays from the pen of a passionate folklorist include two classics on the history of the field *The Fabrication of Fakelore* and *The Anthropologist and the Comparative Method in Folklore* are required reading for anyone seriously interested in folklore as a discipline Barbara Kirshenblat Gimblett Tisch School of the Arts New York University

***Folklore Matters*** Alan Dundes, 1989 not a large book but that makes all the more admirable the way the more admirable the way the author succeeds in doing justice to so many of the most important subjects in folkloristics This book is a key work and should be made compulsory reading in every university in which folkloristics is studied Jon Hnefill Aoalsteinsson Asian Folklore Studies

**Folklore Matters** Bruce Jackson, 2024-02-01 *Folklore Matters* gathers over a half century of articles memoirs field studies and more by master folklorist Bruce Jackson Jackson's wide ranging view of what makes up folklore his affection for his subjects and his keen eyed ability to observe and record without prejudice stories songs and lore from everyone from death row inmates to numbers runners hustlers and legendary blues musicians shines through In his own words Jackson's essays bear witness to worlds that others have too easily ignored This book includes Jackson's landmark work on prison lore and toasts the predecessor of rap labor and criminology his wide ranging interest in African American lore and legend his encounters with legendary figures including Alan Lomax and Pete Seeger and articles that challenge the many traps and pitfalls that plague much of academic study *Folklore Matters* will delight inform and inspire all those who value America's deepest traditions and the endless creativity of the unrecognized masters of our national culture

**A Treasury of British Folklore** Dee Dee Chainey, 2018-10-26 An entertaining and engrossing collection

of British customs superstitions and legends from past and present Did you know in Cumbria it was believed a person lying on a pillow stuffed with pigeon s feathers could not die Or that green is an unlucky colour for wedding dresses In Scotland it was thought you could ward off fairies by hanging your trousers from the foot of the bed and in Gloucestershire you could cure warts by cutting notches in the bark of an ash tree You ve heard about King Arthur and St George but how about the Green Man a vegetative deity who is seen to symbolise death and rebirth Or Black Shuck the giant ghostly dog who was reputed to roam East Anglia In this beautifully illustrated book Dee Dee Chainey tells tales of mountains and rivers pixies and fairy folk and witches and alchemy She explores how British culture has been shaped by the tales passed between generations and by the land that we live on As well as looking at the history of this subject this book lists the places you can go to see folklore alive and well today The Whittlesea Straw Bear Festival in Cambridgeshire or the Abbots Bromley Horn Dance in Staffordshire for example or wassailing cider orchards in Somerset

**The Oxford Handbook of American Folklore and Folklife Studies** Simon J. Bronner, 2019 The Oxford Handbook of American Folklore and Folklife Studies surveys the materials approaches concepts and applications of the field to provide a sweeping guide to American folklore and folklife culture history and society Forty three comprehensive and diverse chapters explore the extraordinary richness of the American social and cultural fabric offering a valuable resource not only for scholars and students of American studies but also for the global study of tradition folk arts and cultural practice

*A Companion to Folklore* Regina F. Bendix, Galit Hasan-Rokem, 2014-08-25 A Companion to Folklore contains an original and comprehensive set of essays from international experts in the field of folklore studies This state of the art collection uniquely displays the vitality of folklore research across the globe The Companion covers four main areas the first section engages with the practices and theoretical approaches developed to understand the phenomena of folklore the second discusses the distinctive shapes that folklore studies have taken in different locations in time and space the third examines the interaction of folklore with various media as well as folklore s commoditization In the final section on practice essays offer insights into how folklorists work what they do and ways in which they have institutionalized their field Throughout contributors investigate the interplay of folklore and folkloristics in both academic and political arenas they evaluate key issues in the folk life of communities from around the world including China post communist Russia post colonial India South America Israel and Japan The result is a unique reflection and understanding of the profoundly different research histories and current perspectives on international research in the field

[Folklore 101](#) Jeana Jorgensen, 2021-10-31 When s the last time you got to pick a folklorist s brain Did you know memes count as folklore Or that folklorists assign numbers to fairy tales to keep track of them all The field of folklore studies is over two centuries old and it s full of amazing insights about human behavior creativity and community Folklore studies is as interdisciplinary as it gets squished somewhere between anthropology and linguistics and religious studies and comparative literature and more It s all about the informal human interactions the million tiny acts and stories

and beliefs and arts that function as social glue even if they seem beneath notice Do traditional holiday foods have a deeper meaning Yep Same with folk music ballads proverbs jokes urban legends body art and a ton more genres covered in this book Is the whole book as easy to read and irreverent as this description Yep This fun accessible guide to the academic study of folklore packs in a college class s worth of material from basic concepts and major folklore genres to special topics based on identity fancy theories and more If you ve always wanted to take a folklore class or you re a writer or artist using folklore in your work or you re just generally interested in the topic this is the book for you This wonderfully insightful book introduces the reader to folklore with warmth and good humor Students and others interested in folklore will love it Libby Tucker Distinguished Service Professor of English Binghamton University and author of *Haunted Halls Ghostlore of American College Campuses* Dr Jeana Jorgensen knows her stuff and just as importantly knows how to communicate it *Folklore 101* is a treasure trove of knowledge the kind it would take years of college courses to accumulate yourself If you re curious about academic folklore this clear engaging book is where you want to start Dr Sara Cleto co founder of The Carterhaugh School of Folklore and the Fantastic

*Folklore and Book Culture* Kevin J. Hayes,1997 To many observers folklore and book culture might appear to be opposites Folklore after all involves orally circulated stories and traditions while book culture is concerned with the transmission of written texts However as Kevin J Hayes points out there are many instances where the two intersect and exploring those intersections is the purpose of this fascinating and provocative study Hayes shows that the acquisition of knowledge and the ownership of books have not displaced folklore but instead have given rise to new beliefs and superstitions Some book have generated new proverbs others have fostered their own legends Occasionally the book has served as an important motif in folklore and in one folk genre the flyleaf rhyme the book itself has become the place where folklore occurs thus indicating a lively interaction between folk print and manuscript culture Solidly researched and venturing into areas long neglected by scholars *Folklore and Book Culture* is a work that will engage not only folklorists but historians and literary scholars as well

*Folklore and Ethnology in the Soviet Western Borderlands* Simon J. Bronner,Toms Kencis,Elo-Hanna Seljamaa,2023-12-08 Thirteen international scholars assess the profound impact of Soviet era movements to study apply and perform folklore as a priority in socialist policy formation and culture building Representing generations who lived through and after Soviet occupation they reflect on the consequences of state supported promotion of folk arts in a region called the Western Borderlands that include Baltic countries Ukraine Poland Slovakia Belarus Romania and Hungary In their incisive analyses authors present original archival materials as well as ethnographic data to understand colonialist support for bottom up folklore movements and resistance to them Capping the volume is a timely consideration of Soviet orchestration of folkloristic work on present developments in conflicts of Russia with its neighbors and alignments with Western folkloristics and ethnology

*Folklore Studies in India: Critical Regional Responses* Sahdev Luhar,2023-02-25 *Folklore Studies in India Critical Regional Responses* is an interesting compilation of twenty eight critical articles on the

beginning of folklore studies in the different parts of India In the absence of a book that could map the history of Indian folklore studies single handedly this book can be deemed as the first of its kind to feature the historical development of folklore studies in the different states of India This book succinctly introduces the readers to the folk culture folk arts and folk genres of a particular region and to the different aspects of folkloristic researches carried out in that region

**Halloween and Other Festivals of Death and Life** Jack Santino, 2025-03-14 Why do we celebrate Halloween No one gets the day off and unlike all other major holidays it has no religious or governmental affiliation A survivor of our pre Christian agrarian roots it has become one of the most popular and widely celebrated festivals on the contemporary American calendar Jack Santino has put together the first collection of essays to examine the evolution of Halloween from its Celtic origins through its adaptation into modern culture Using a wide variety of perspectives and approaches the thirteen essayists examine customs communities and material culture to reveal how Halloween has manifested itself throughout all aspects of our society to become not just a marginal survivor of a dying tradition but a thriving contemporary post industrial festival Its steadily increasing popularity despite overcommercialization and criticism is attributed to its powerful symbolism that employs both pre Christian images and concepts from popular culture to appeal to groups of all ages orientations and backgrounds However the essays in this volume also suggest that there is something ironic and unsettling about the immense popularity of a holiday whose main images are of death evil and the grotesque Halloween and other Festivals of Death and Life is a unique contribution that questions our concepts of religiosity and spirituality while contributing to our understanding of Halloween as a rich and diverse reflection of our society s past present and future identity Folktales and Fairy Tales Anne E. Duggan Ph.D., Donald Haase Ph.D., Helen J. Callow, 2016-02-12 Encyclopedic in its coverage this one of a kind reference is ideal for students scholars and others who need reliable up to date information on folk and fairy tales past and present Folktales and fairy tales have long played an important role in cultures around the world They pass customs and lore from generation to generation provide insights into the peoples who created them and offer inspiration to creative artists working in media that now include television film manga photography and computer games This second expanded edition of an award winning reference will help students and teachers as well as storytellers writers and creative artists delve into this enchanting world and keep pace with its past and its many new facets Alphabetically organized and global in scope the work is the only multivolume reference in English to offer encyclopedic coverage of this subject matter The four volume collection covers national cultural regional and linguistic traditions from around the world as well as motifs themes characters and tale types Writers and illustrators are included as are filmmakers and composers and of course the tales themselves The expert entries within volumes 1 through 3 are based on the latest research and developments while the contents of volume 4 comprises tales and texts While most books either present readers with tales from certain countries or cultures or with thematic entries this encyclopedia stands alone in that it does both making it a truly unique one stop resource *American*

*Trickster* Emily Zobel Marshall, 2019-06-18 Our fascination with the trickster figure whose presence is global stems from our desire to break free from the tightly regimented structures of our societies Condemned to conform to laws and rules imposed by governments communities social groups and family bonds we revel in the fantasy of the trickster whose energy and cunning knows no bounds and for whom nothing is sacred One such trickster is Brer Rabbit who was introduced to North America through the folktales of enslaved Africans On the plantations Brer Rabbit like Anansi in the Caribbean functioned as a resistance figure for the enslaved whose trickery was aimed at undermining and challenging the plantation regime Yet as Brer Rabbit tales moved from the oral tradition to the printed page in the late nineteenth century the trickster was emptied of his potentially powerful symbolism by white American collectors authors and folklorists in their attempt to create a nostalgic fantasy of the plantation past American Trickster offers readers a unique insight into the cultural significance of the Brer Rabbit trickster figure from his African roots and through to his influence on contemporary culture Exploring the changing portrayals of the trickster figure through a wealth of cultural forms including folktales advertising fiction and films the book scrutinises the profound tensions between the perpetuation of damaging racial stereotypes and the need to keep African American folk traditions alive Emily Zobel Marshall argues that Brer Rabbit was eventually reclaimed by twentieth century African American novelists whose protagonists trick their way out of limiting stereotypes break down social and cultural boundaries and offer readers practical and psychological methods for challenging the traumatic legacies of slavery and racism

*Approaches to Greek Myth* Lowell Edmunds, 2021-04-27 A handy introduction to some of the more useful methodological approaches to and the previous scholarship on the subject of Greek myths Phoenix Since the first edition of *Approaches to Greek Myth* was published in 1990 interest in Greek mythology has surged There was no simple agreement on the subject of myth in classical antiquity and there remains none today Is myth a narrative or a performance Can myth be separated from its context What did myths mean to ancient Greeks and what do they mean today Here Lowell Edmunds brings together practitioners of eight of the most important contemporary approaches to the subject Whether exploring myth from a historical comparative or theoretical perspective each contributor lucidly describes a particular approach applies it to one or more myths and reflects on what the approach yields that others do not Edmunds's new general and chapter level introductions recontextualize these essays and also touch on recent developments in scholarship in the interpretation of Greek myth Contributors are Jordi P mias on the reception of Greek myth through history H S Versnel on the intersections of myth and ritual Carolina L pez Ruiz on the near Eastern contexts Joseph Falaky Nagy on Indo European structure in Greek myth William Hansen on myth and folklore Claude Calame on the application of semiotic theory of narrative Christiane Sourvinou Inwood on reading visual sources such as vase paintings and Robert A Segal on psychoanalytic interpretations A valuable collection of eight essays Edmunds's book provides a convenient opportunity to grapple with the current methodologies used in the analysis of literature and myth New England Classical Newsletter and Journal *Theorizing*

*Folklore from the Margins* Solimar Otero, Mintzi Auanda Martínez-Rivera, 2021-06-15 The study of folklore has historically focused on the daily life and culture of regular people such as artisans storytellers and craftspeople But what can folklore reveal about strategies of belonging survival and reinvention in moments of crisis The experience of living in hostile conditions for cultural social political or economic reasons has redefined communities in crisis The curated works in *Theorizing Folklore from the Margins* offer clear and feasible suggestions for how to ethically engage in the study of folklore with marginalized populations By focusing on issues of critical race and ethnic studies decolonial and antioppressive methodologies and gender and sexuality studies contributors employ a wide variety of disciplines and theoretical approaches In doing so they reflect the transdisciplinary possibilities of Folklore studies By bridging the gap between theory and practice *Theorizing Folklore from the Margins* confirms that engaging with oppressed communities is not only relevant but necessary

*Folk Women and Indirection in Morrison, N Dhuibhne, Hurston, and Lavin* Jacqueline Fulmer, 2017-11-30 Focusing on the lineage of pivotal African American and Irish women writers the author argues that these authors often employ strategies of indirection via folkloric expression when exploring unpopular topics This strategy holds the attention of readers who would otherwise reject the subject matter The author traces the line of descent from Mary Lavin to N Dhuibhne and from Zora Neale Hurston to Toni Morrison showing how obstacles to free expression though varying from those Lavin and Hurston faced are still encountered by Morrison and N Dhuibhne The basis for comparing these authors lies in the strategies of indirection they use as influenced by folklore The folkloric characters these authors depict wild denizens of the Otherworld and wise women of various traditions help their creators insert controversy into fiction in ways that charm rather than alienate readers Forms of rhetorical indirection that appear in the context of folklore such as signifying practices masking sly civility and the grotesque or bizarre come out of the mouths and actions of these writers magical and magisterial characters Old traditions can offer new ways of discussing issues such as sexual expression religious beliefs or issues of reproduction As differences between times and cultures affect what can and cannot be said folkloric indirection may open up a vista to discourses of which we as readers may not even be aware Finally the folk women of Morrison N Dhuibhne Hurston and Lavin open up new points of entry to the discussion of fiction rhetoric censorship and folklore

*The Transmission of Kapsiki-Higi Folktales over Two Generations* Walter E.A. van Beek, 2016-11-03 This study on Kapsiki Higi tales compares two corpuses of stories collected over two generations In this oral setting folktales appear much more dynamic than usually assumed depending on genre performance and the memory characteristics of the tales themselves In northeastern Nigeria the author collected these tales twice with a time gap of two generations in order to assess the dynamics of this oral transmission The comparison between the two corpuses shows that folktales are a much more dynamic cultural system than is usually thought These dynamics affect some types of tales more than others reflect social change and intergroup contact but also depend on characteristics of the tales themselves Cognitive approaches of memory shed light on these varieties of transmission as do



performance aspects in tale telling in particular ideophones

**Killing Tradition** Simon J. Bronner, 2008-11-21 Across the country and around the world people avidly engage in the cultural practice of hunting Children are taken on rite of passage hunting trips where relationships are cemented and legacies are passed on from one generation to another Meals are prepared from hunted game often consisting of regionally specific dishes that reflect a community's heritage and character Deer antlers and bear skins are hung on living room walls decorations and relics of a hunter's most impressive kills Only 5 percent of Americans are hunters but that group has a substantial presence in the cultural consciousness Hunting has spurred controversy in recent years inciting protest from animal rights activists and lobbying from anti cruelty demonstrators who denounce the custom But hunters have responded to such criticisms and the resulting legislative censures with a significant argument in their defense the claim that their practices are inextricably connected to a cultural tradition Further they counter that they as representatives of the rural lifestyle pioneer heritage and traditional American values are the ones being victimized Simon J Bronner investigates this debate in *Killing Tradition Inside Hunting and Animal Rights Controversies* Through extensive research and fieldwork Bronner takes on the many questions raised by this problematic subject Does hunting promote violence toward humans as well as animals Is it an outdated activity unnecessary in modern times Is the heritage of hunting worth preserving *Killing Tradition* looks at three case studies that are at the heart of today's hunting debate Bronner first examines the allegedly barbaric rituals that take place at deer camps every late November in rural America He then analyzes the annual Labor Day pigeon shoot of Hegins Pennsylvania which brings animal rights protests to a fever pitch Noting that these aren't simply American concerns and that the animal rights movement in America is linked to British animal welfare protests Bronner examines the rancor surrounding the passage of Great Britain's Hunting Act of 2004 the most comprehensive and divisive anti hunting legislation ever enacted The practice of hunting is sure to remain controversial as it continues to be touted and defended by its supporters and condemned and opposed by its detractors With *Killing Tradition* Bronner reflects on the social psychological and anthropological issues of the debate reevaluating notions of violence cruelty abuse and tradition as they have been constructed and contested in the twenty first century

**Folk Women and Indirection in Morrison, N Dhuibhne, Hurston, and Lavin** Jacqueline Fulmer, 2017-11-30 Focusing on the lineage of pivotal African American and Irish women writers the author argues that these authors often employ strategies of indirection via folkloric expression when exploring unpopular topics This strategy holds the attention of readers who would otherwise reject the subject matter The author traces the line of descent from Mary Lavin to N Dhuibhne and from Zora Neale Hurston to Toni Morrison showing how obstacles to free expression though varying from those Lavin and Hurston faced are still encountered by Morrison and N Dhuibhne The basis for comparing these authors lies in the strategies of indirection they use as influenced by folklore The folkloric characters these authors depict wild denizens of the Otherworld and wise women of various traditions help their creators insert controversy into fiction in ways that charm

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